



**THOMAS L. GARTHWAITE, M.D.**  
Director and Chief Medical Officer

**FRED LEAF**  
Chief Operating Officer

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
313 N. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 240-8101

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**Gloria Molina**  
First District

**Yvonne Brathwaite Burke**  
Second District

**Zev Yaroslavsky**  
Third District

**Don Knabe**  
Fourth District

**Michael D. Antonovich**  
Fifth District

October 1, 2002

**TO:** Each Supervisor

**FROM:** Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.  
Director and Chief Medical Officer

Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director of Public Health and Health Officer

**SUBJECT: REPORT ON RAW MILK**

In March 2001, the Board approved an ordinance to permit Guaranteed and Grade A raw milk to be sold in the County. In addition, the Board approved a motion by Supervisor Antonovich instructing the Department of Health Services to work with the State to ensure that the State inspection system for "Guaranteed" and "Grade A" is properly applied to all dairies producing raw milk. The Board also approved Supervisor Yaroslavsky's amendment to conduct a formal study to monitor cases of salmonellosis and other raw milk-related diseases and report back to the Board in six months. This is the third six-month status report.

Since the Department's last report on April 5, 2002, the Acute Communicable Disease Control (ACDC) Unit has continued to monitor cases of raw milk associated diseases. As indicated on Attachment I, there was one reported instance of raw milk-related disease from commercially sold raw milk during the eight month period January through August 2002. This case was investigated; however, staff were unable to determine what brand of milk was consumed because the individual who consumed the milk did not purchase it, and the person who bought it could not recall the brand. In addition, there were 19 reported cases of disease related to milk or milk products produced outside the United States during that period. Also, ACDC is working with San Bernardino County officials to investigate illness in a group of youth who drank raw milk on a San Bernardino County farm during a farm tour. ACDC will continue to monitor as well as to advise and encourage clinicians to report raw milk associated diseases as mandated by the State of California.

Environmental Health staff collected samples of "Grade A" raw whole, raw non-fat, and raw cream products produced by Claravale Dairy from July 3, 2001 to present for laboratory testing. In January 2002, Organic Pastures Dairy began distribution of its organic raw milk products to Los Angeles County. Consequently, departmental staff have begun collecting samples from this producer for laboratory testing. No pathogens nor any unusual occurrences have been found as a result of the laboratory testing.

Claravale Dairy, which produces in Santa Cruz County, distributes approximately 250 gallons of raw milk and raw milk products weekly to approximately 16 retail food facilities in Los Angeles County. Organic Pastures Dairy Company, which produces in Fresno County, also distributes approximately 250 gallons per week. Together, these two distributors currently provide approximately 500 gallons of raw milk and raw milk products a week to Los Angeles County retail food facilities.

In addition to Los Angeles County conducting laboratory testing of raw milk product samples, the State also conducts monthly testing of market samples of raw milk and raw milk products. Environmental Health's review of the testing results from State and County laboratories has revealed none of the four key pathogens (*Salmonella*, *Listeria*, *E. coli*, and *Campylobacter*) in any of the samples tested.

Staff continues to obtain samples from both producers periodically for testing and to review the State's test results. If the results continue to show no pathogens and if the Department continues to receive the State reports in a timely manner, Environmental Health will reassess how frequently local testing needs to be done.

I will provide you with another report in six months. In the meantime, if you have any questions or need additional information, please let either of us know.

TG:ma  
012:011

Attachment

c: Chief Administrative Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

## REPORTS ILLNESSES ASSOCIATED WITH RAW MILK – LOS ANGELES COUNTY, JANUARY - AUGUST 2002

Disease	Number of cases	Source
Campylobacteriosis*	7	1 case drank domestic raw milk, brand unknown (purchased by another person). 3 consumed raw milk cheese brought from Mexico. 3 consumed raw milk or cheese in Mexico.
Brucellosis	4	3 travel-related cases/had unpasteurized milk or cheese in Mexico. 1 had unpasteurized milk or cheese in Egypt.
Salmonellosis	9	6 travel-related cases consumed unpasteurized milk or cheese during travel outside the United States of America. 3 consumed cheese brought from El Salvador; cheese grew same serotype of Salmonella as cases.

\* In August, an outbreak of campylobacteriosis was reported in a group of youth who consumed raw milk on a San Bernardino farm. The investigation is ongoing.

Prepared by Acute Communicable Disease Control, Public Health, LAC-DHS.